

3 January 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: CIA Records Management Board

ATTENTION : [REDACTED]  
SUBJECT : Purge of Inactive Records

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1. Purge efforts made during the final quarter of CY 68 are described below.

a) Three (3) cubic feet of O/DCI inactive records were withdrawn from the Records Center and transferred to O/DCI.

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b) [REDACTED] DDI/RMO was asked by memorandum to confirm the necessity for the Cable Secretariat to deposit copies of non-CIA cables as a Vital Record for the DDI Directorate. This file is maintained at a volume of approximately 25 cubic feet covering a 90 day period. Disposition instructions provide for automatic destruction of packages dated more than 90 days. This item was incorporated in our VR schedule as a result of the transfer of OCR/CB to the Cable Secretariat in January 1961. [REDACTED] has advised me that so far he has found no DDI component interested in the continuation of the file as a Vital Record. I will obtain concurrences from other units having a possible minority interest in the file before discontinuing deposits and authorizing destruction of the current file. (Attachment A)

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c) No records were destroyed during this period.

2. DDP, DDS, DDI, and DDS&T RMO's were asked by memorandum (Attachment B) to indicate their requirements for Cable Secretariat reference service for CIA cables; the time span within which service would be required; and to recommend a retention period for the file irrespective of the manner in which the file is maintained. Responses are summarized below:

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a) [REDACTED] expects DDP unit requirements for service to continue at the same level (600-650 requests per month) and states that the Cable Secretariat's reference file serves as a Vital Record backstop for the Clandestine Services. He recommends the file be retained for a period of at least 60 years. He comments that in view of the requirement considerably beyond a 15 year retention that microfilm of the entire file appears economically feasible and would permit more efficient service. (Attachment C)

b) DDS components indicated only a marginal interest in our file. OTR, OP, COMMO, and O/DDS have no requirements for service from the files; LOGS, SECUR, FINAN, and MEDICS confirm a continued need for service at current levels ranging from a few cables a year to a few cables a month over a time span of from 1 to 15 years. (Attachment D)

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c) [REDACTED] for DDI, has advised by telephone that DDI components have no requirements for cable reference service. He will confirm this by memorandum.

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d) [REDACTED] has advised by telephone that while all DDS&T components have not yet responded that the time span for service from the file, should service be needed, would be within a range of 1 to 5 years. He will confirm this by memorandum shortly.

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3. I met once with [REDACTED] DDS&T to discuss the feasibility of re-establishing a microfilm program for the cable file and later met with [REDACTED] PSD, regarding equipment and film processing. While no firm conclusions were reached the discussions of the group did serve to identify a number of problem areas for further study and resolution prior to making a final judgement on this matter.

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a) The backlog of cable pages for the period July 1963 to present is estimated at 2,200,000 pages.

b) Cables in the file are organized in numerical sequence by IN number; multiple page cables are stapled and appear in random order of receipt; second and subsequent pages are "tumble" printed on the reverse side of the page. These physical characteristics preclude the use of high speed automatic feed, two side microfilm equipment.

c) Access to the file is limited to Cable Secretariat personnel.

d) Any microfilming efforts by the Cable Secretariat are not now possible with present money/manpower.

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4. [REDACTED] recommendation to extend the retention period for the reference file adds a new dimension to the overall problem of administering the cable reference file. Efforts to resolve the problem will continue in consultation with [REDACTED] and representatives of the Records Management Staff.

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[REDACTED]  
Deputy Cable Secretary

Attachments  
As stated